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21 June 1963

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MEMORANDUM FOR: General Carter  
Mr. Kirkpatrick

Mr. McCone wishes to sign personally such notices when they are at the direction of the President.



STATINTL

Attachment

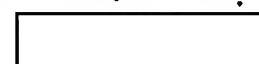
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

OFFICE OF DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

17 June 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL EMPLOYEES:

In 1958 the Congress authorized a National Cultural Center to be located near the Lincoln Memorial. The purpose of the Center is to provide a proper setting for the presentation of classical and contemporary music, opera, drama, dance, poetry and other performing arts.

An appropriate structure, housing theater and concert halls, will cost about thirty million dollars. A nationwide fund-raising program will be conducted, but during the period 16 - 30 June 1963 a special campaign will be conducted for Federal personnel in the Washington area.

The President of the United States has requested that this campaign be announced to the members of our Agency and that each of us be given the opportunity to be a part of the creation of this national institution. Descriptive literature is attached for your review and also an envelope in which you may place such contribution as you wish to make. Please hand your contribution to the Administrative Officer or Chief of Support of your component who will forward it to the Benefits and Services Division, Office of Personnel.

[Redacted]

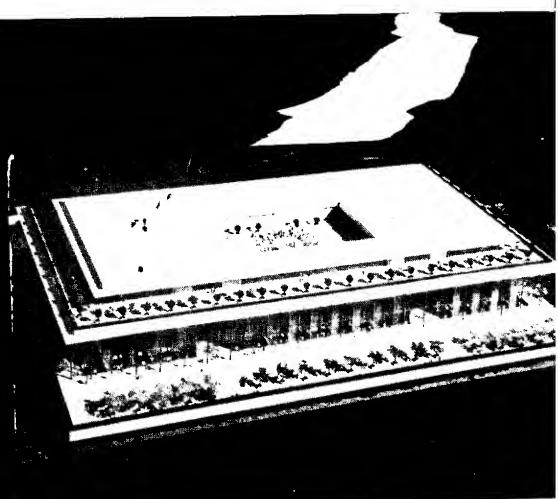
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Marshall S. Carter  
Lieutenant General, USA  
Deputy Director

# THE WASHINGTON AREA FEDERAL PERSONNEL CONTRIBUTION

to the

# NATIONAL CULTURAL CENTER BUILDING PROGRAM



## *Our National Cultural Center is Urgently Needed*

The Nation's Capital is woefully lacking in proper facilities for the performing arts. The National Cultural Center will be a national showcase for music, drama, opera, ballet and poetry. It will provide an important focal point for the cultural activities of Washington, D. C. and the entire nation . . . for our own performing artists and for visitors from all over the world.

Please use accompanying envelope to make your important contribution to the Future of the Nation's Capital.

"I wholeheartedly endorse this program for fostering the performing arts as a vital and cherished part of the environment and value system we wish to fashion for ourselves and our children."

JOHN F. KENNEDY

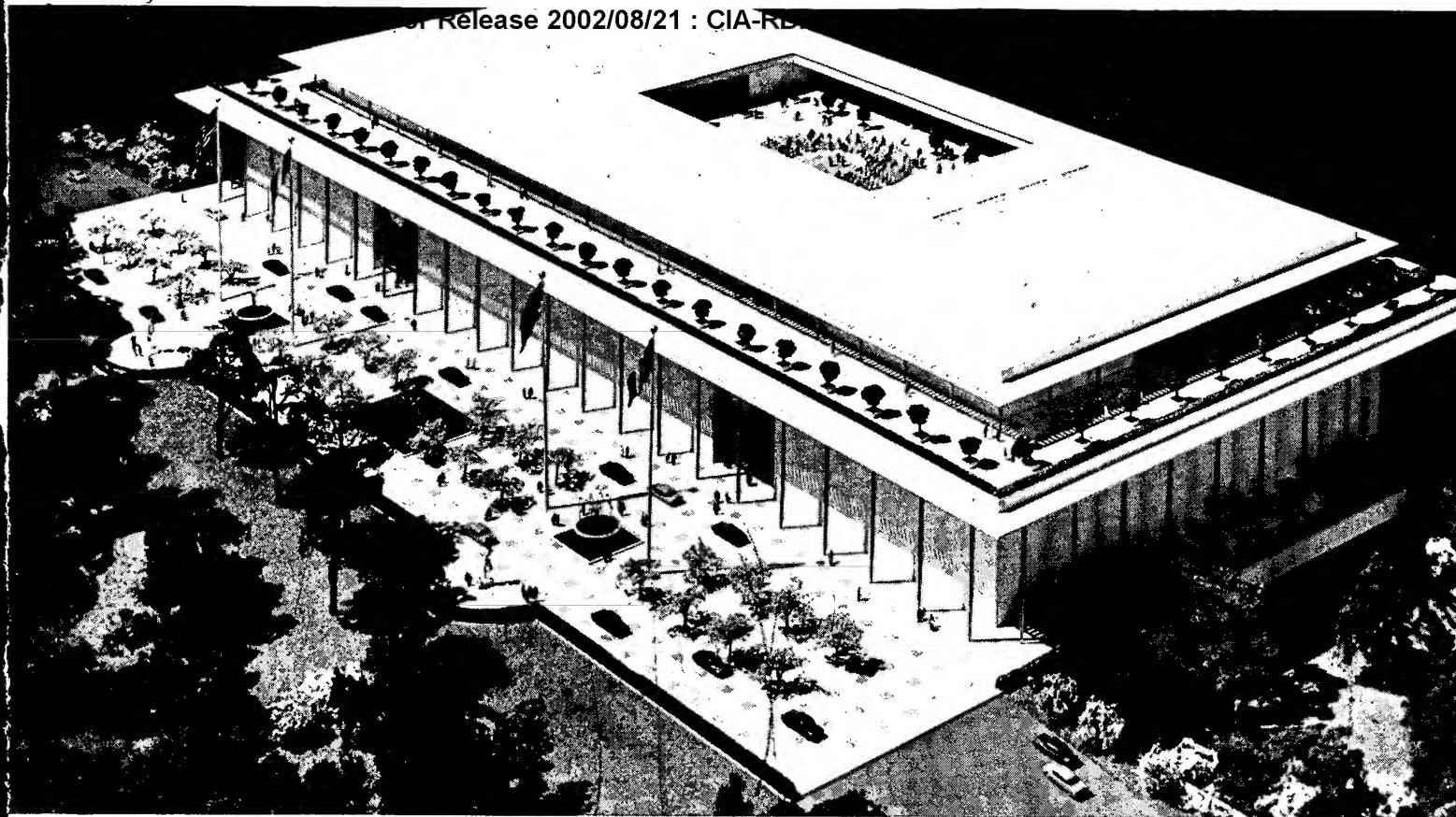
★ "The performing arts are a special form of communications that both enlighten and entertain. The National Cultural Center can do much to encourage performers throughout the nation."

★ DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER



## *Why the National Cultural Center Needs Your Contribution*

The National Cultural Center will belong to all the people—the entire nation. We in Government here in the Metropolitan Washington Area have a great personal interest not only for ourselves and for others to come, but as a magnificent Heritage for our children. Congress has done its part by providing the site for this center for the Performing Arts. Now it's up to us to provide the funds to build the National Cultural Center. The people of this city are being asked to contribute one-quarter of the total, \$30,000,000 needed—the rest to be given by the entire nation. Your contribution is needed and the time is now.



by Roger L. Stevens

# **American Dream: A National Cultural Center**

**As a nation,** Americans always have been among the first to pay tribute to those who do great things. We honor our statesmen, our military heroes, our pioneers in science. If their achievements are of a nature to produce tangible symbols, then we like to bring those symbols to Washington for permanent public display. In this way, we acknowledge that the achievements have brought honor and credit to all America and are a source of great pride to all Americans.

In another field of endeavor, that of the performing arts, we have musicians, actors, dancers, singers and poets who are second to none. They, too, bring our country great honor and credit. But we do not, thus far, possess the means to give them comparable national acknowledgment. We do not have a national forum in which to display their achievements. We have run a grave risk of giving a false impression, to ourselves and to the people of other lands: that we do not regard the performing arts as an integral part of our lives.

ROGER L. STEVENS is Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Cultural Center. A Detroit real estate man and theatrical producer, Stevens has produced or co-produced over 100 Broadway plays and holds office in a variety of professional organizations.

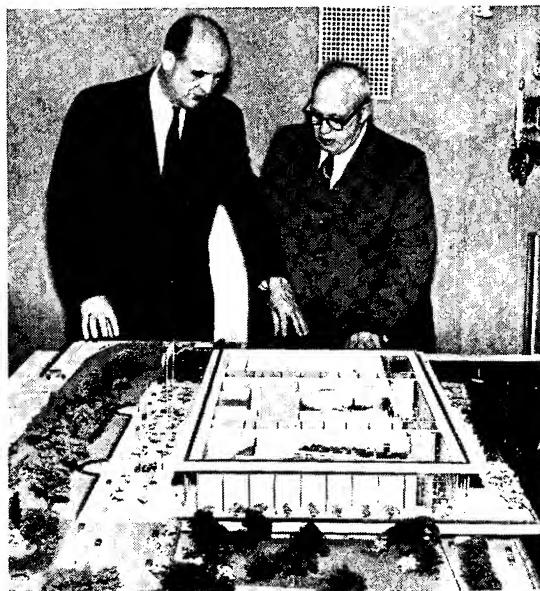
Ours is a country in which more people attend concerts in the United States than go to baseball games, both major and minor leagues and including the World Series. We possess more than one half the total number of symphony orchestras in the world, 1,200 out of 2,000. We have 700 opera companies across the nation and more than 10,000 theatrical groups. In every state in the union, local cultural groups are striving to turn what they consider to be worthwhile endeavors into practical contributions to the lives of their communities. Talent is widespread in these cities and regions, in colleges and universities. Yet we have failed to give national recognition and national dignity and national acknowledgment to these efforts and to this talent.

**A short while ago,** the National Cultural Center's newsletter, "Footlight," sought the views of a famous conductor of a leading symphony orchestra and those of the conductor of a lesser-known community orchestra on the importance they each attached to a National Cultural Center. Their opinions were very interesting.

Erich Leinsdorf, conductor and music director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, had this to say about why a Cultural

The proposed National Cultural Center (left) as it will be seen from the air. The Center was designed by Edward Durell Stone.

A roofless model of the Center (right) is examined by two trustees. Roger Stevens points out a feature of the Center to AFL-CIO President George Meany.



Center? Why not just another fine hall? I'll tell you why. A cultural center is a total enclosure. It should be the temporary home of everyone in the audience. At the end of the working day, you can leave the fumes and noises behind and go into an entirely different atmosphere. I like to think of the Cultural Center as a reservation in the way our national parks are reservations. It represents a concerted effort to protect the nerves and souls of human beings."

Then we talked with Igor Buketoff, conductor and musical director of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic Orchestra, Fort Wayne, Indiana, who saw in the National Cultural Center a challenging incentive to community groups such as his own orchestra. "When we play outside of our own hall," Buketoff said, "the facilities are often rudimentary. Symphony orchestras can have no dignity when they perform in wrestling arenas. Ballet and theatre groups have no dignity when they perform in discarded vaudeville houses. Once the performing arts have befitting homes in cultural centers, their prestige will soar and it will become the accepted and natural thing to support them. The National Cultural Center will show the way for this evolution of thinking."

These gentlemen were speaking from the world of the symphony orchestra. But it is the same for all the performing arts. Actress Cornelia Otis Skinner has said: "My training with the Comedie Francaise in Paris taught me that a national presentation means *prestige*. To perform upon one's country's national stage gives this stamp of prestige that cannot be obtained in any other way."

Ballerina Maria Tallchief has drawn attention to the fact that many young dancers today feel the necessity to complete their studies overseas, believing there are inadequate facilities and inadequate recognition in their own country. They feel European training and reputation are all the American public will accept. "This is not entirely true," said Miss Tallchief. "The facilities are here and we have the finest teachers and choreographers. But the recognition is missing. This is why a National Cultural Center is so sorely needed—to lead the country into acceptance of its own artistic greatness."

Composer Richard Rodgers, speaking of acknowledgment for his own branch of the performing arts, said: "The best thing that could happen to the musical theatre is that it receive national recognition in a national climate under a national roof."

All reasons why we need a National Cultural Center.

**Now what will the Center do when it is built, when its three great halls are lighted and its programs have been put into effect?**

It will be not merely an entity of concrete, steel and marble. It will be not just another set of halls, albeit splendid ones with every modern technical facility. Rather it will be a place where ideas are received, where they are created, nurtured and disseminated; it will be a nerve-center for all the cultural organizations throughout the country.

In drawing up the Center's programs, the Board of Trustees is fully aware of certain basic musts.

The programs must reach, demand, encourage and

maintain the highest possible standards of artistic expression. They must adhere to the policy that, in all of its undertakings, the National Cultural Center is a *national* organization, built by the American people for the American people and for them to share with each other and with the rest of the world.

There will be a program to provide an attainable goal for the hundreds of talented individuals and cultural groups throughout the country who have not yet reached a national performing status. There are symphonies, jazz bands, theatrical, operatic companies, as well as singers, actors, dancers and poets in every section of the country whose standard of performance is exceedingly high. They may have succeeded in gaining recognition in their own town, region or state, but they may have had no opportunity as yet to be recognized on a national level.

The Center will stage a series of national and international festivals where the criterion for presentation will be quality of performance. This will be the first time this has been done in the nation's capital and those groups and individuals meriting the honor will be invited to participate.

**In carrying out** this program with imagination and vigor, encouragement and impetus will be given to cultural enterprises everywhere; pride in local attainments will be fostered and the financial structure of community groups will be strengthened.

The road to acceptance and success for the gifted unknown is a long and hard one. The ability may be there but not the opportunity.

In order that new talent, representing a hitherto untapped contribution to our national artistic resources, may be sought out, tried and proved, a series of state and regional contests will be held. These contests, again for the first time, will cover the entire range of the performing arts and will be open to every individual of merit everywhere. The winners will be brought to the National Cultural Center for a national debut.

Despite the fact that the Center will be physically located in one city, benefit from its programs will be felt throughout the country. One prime area where this benefit can be expected to have significant impact is that of education.

Through the most up-to-date means of communication, the Center will be able to bring its programs to people throughout the United States, to schools, colleges and universities and to countries overseas. It can make a significant contribution to the educational curricula of America.

The new media, unheard of a couple of decades ago, includes radio and television, all types of recordings and motion pictures. In addition to the some 3,500 AM and 1,000 FM radio stations, 600 television stations and the four major commercial radio networks and three major television networks, there also is an educational television video tape network, with 65 associates, reaching almost every principal city in the country. At least 600 educational closed-circuit television systems are in operation across the

United States and further distribution of the Center's programs could be carried through the National Educational Television and Radio Center and the National Association of Educational Broadcasters.

There will be broadcasts of artistic events, concerts, operas, ballets, recitals, plays, lectures and seminars, as well as of official receptions and presentations. There will be recordings, both visual and aural, for delayed broadcasting, for circulation as recordings and for library use. The Center's programs will be able to reach into the schoolhouse and college in New Mexico, in Rhode Island, in Oregon and Florida. Advanced students of the performing arts, of history, literature and music will have an added, comprehensive and vivid source of research.

**Artistic expression**, in all its forms, cuts through language, geographic and, to a significant degree, political barriers. It is the greatest single means of communication among people and nations. It is upon this base that our international cultural exchange program is founded. The National Cultural Center will carry out a program to increase the effectiveness of this existing arrangement.

At the present time, distinguished artists from overseas, invited to appear in the United States, frequently are offered facilities which are inadequate and unsuited to their needs. While they give of their best, they in return are not provided with the best.

It is fitting that the nation's capital should play official host to artists from other countries and, in so doing, should offer stages, auditoriums and technical equipment worthy of the visitors' art.

The Center will extend official invitations to foreign artists and will provide the finest stages for their presentations. These national presentations can be linked to official state visits by chiefs of state and other dignitaries. In this way, the people of the United States, through their National Cultural Center, can demonstrate to the visiting performer and to his nation that we attach the importance it warrants to our participation in all international cultural exchange.

These, then, are some of the things the Center will do when it is built.

**What will it look like** when it is built? To design the building, the Board of Trustees selected the well-known architect, Edward Durell Stone. Last September, Stone formally presented his model to the Center's Honorary Co-Chairmen, Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. Eisenhower. Both they and, subsequently, the Commission on Fine Arts and the Board itself expressed themselves delighted and excited with his design. The site selected on the east bank of the Potomac River in Washington has been described by Stone as "one of the most exciting and glorious settings for a public building in the world." Situated opposite Theodore Roosevelt Island, a bird sanctuary in the middle of the river and decreed by law to remain in its natural state, the Center will be set in a permanently park-like atmosphere. Its rooftop will command a magnificent view of the city.

The building will include a 1,200-seat theatre, a 2,750-seat symphony hall and a 2,500-seat hall for opera, musical comedy and ballet. A garden-like roof area, with retractable roof to ensure use in all weather, has been designed for band concerts, art exhibits, festivals, theatre-in-the-round, balls and restaurants. The Center itself will rise 100 feet from a terraced plaza and will be 300 feet wide and 630 feet long.

Numerous delicate steel columns encased in bronze with a gold finish will surround the building. A concrete substructure will be topped by a steel superstructure and the entire building will be sheathed with white marble facing. The entrance plaza will include fountains and indigenous flowering trees, including the traditional Washington cherry and magnolia trees. A spectacular night-time effect will be created by exterior floodlighting and jet fountains rising from the Potomac River on gala occasions.

The architect has designed well. He has drawn up plans for a building in absolute conformity with the ideals and standards of the finished Center.

**Now, how will it be built?** In the National Cultural Center Act, Congress designated those magnificent 13 acres on the banks of the Potomac River as the site of the Center, but stipulated that the funds for the building must come from voluntary contributions. Congress went further. It authorized, for the first time, a nationwide fundraising campaign for a cultural enterprise.

We launched the fundraising drive with a closed-circuit, nationwide telecast last November, in which more than 60 local communities from coast to coast participated. We have other drives now under way—we believe them to be practical and imaginative—and we are confident we will raise the \$30 million necessary to build the Center in the shortest possible time.

The dollars comprising that \$30 million will come from people who demand a standard which is constant, by people who will not take their art with a dose of compromise. It will be built by people whose vision is broader than just the path of day-to-day existence, but who realize that that existence requires a substantial artistic ingredient. It will be built by the dollars of people who have enormous pride in their country's artistic achievements and who want to hold those achievements up for the whole country and the rest of the world to see. It will be built by people who

give of their best in their own endeavor, and that a dignity be accorded to those efforts and, by the same token, demand that a similar dignity be accorded to the efforts of others, in other fields of endeavor.

**Speaking for labor,** AFL-CIO President George Meany said this shortly after accepting President Kennedy's invitation to sit on the Center's Board of Trustees: "This is a project that should arouse the enthusiasm of all of us in the labor movement. We have done much to win for American workers the leisure time to which they are entitled; surely it is highly appropriate for us to join in an undertaking that will help to make those leisure hours more rewarding. In this instance there is the further consideration that an overwhelming majority of the performing artists, to whom this enterprise is so important, are also members of AFL-CIO unions."

For decades now, the entertainment and performing unions have worked for the preservation, betterment and the expansion of the performing arts. Members traditionally have been tireless in their efforts to overcome inadequate conditions and facilities, to provide a respectable livelihood for those who have chosen the arts as their profession.

The National Cultural Center will not carry out the functions of the labor unions, it will complement them. It will increase audiences throughout the nation and, where this is done, employment consequently will be increased. The Center will elevate national respect for the arts whereby they may be regarded with the same distinction as they themselves have won for the country.

We want people to *know* about the Center, about the need for it, about its programs and the benefit that it can bring to every citizen of the United States. We want people to think of a national center for the performing arts in terms of *America's national stage*—a focus in the nation's capital which represents and frames some of the foremost interests and activities of our people, those of the drama, dance, music and poetry.

We want to build our National Cultural Center well and we want to build it right. In order to do this, we need the support of everyone who places a high value upon the cultural attainments of our country and who wants to see them granted the national dignity and recognition they deserve.

An artist's view of an open air concert on the Cultural Center's roof terrace. The retractable roof allows all-weather use for concerts, theater, balls and dining.

